

Message Text

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10

ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 SAB-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-05

ACDA-10 SAM-01 /114 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:MVANORDER:RGH

APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN

S/PRS -MR. FUNSETH (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

EUR/P - MR. JERABEK

IO/P - MR. BLACHLY

NEA/ARN - MR. BULLEN

NEA/ARP - MR. AHERNE

AF/P - MR. POPE

NEA - MS. GRIFFIN

----- 085733

R 020058Z MAR 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
USCINCEUR

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GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL, CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR MARCH 1,
1976:

Q. THE ISRAELI PRESS REPORTED RECENTLY THAT THE CABINET
DECISION AUTHORIZING THE AMERICANS TO PROBE THE REACTIONS
OF ARAB CAPITALS ON THE QUESTION OF ENDING THE STATE OF
WAR WAS SOLICITED BY THE UNITED STATES WHEN MR. RABIN WAS
HERE. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THAT OR ANY EVALUATION
OF THE ISRAELI DECISION?

A. IT IS HARD FOR ME TO EVALUATE THOSE REPORTS. I HAD
SEEN SOMETHING TO THAT EFFECT LAST WEEK. BUT ON THAT
WHOLE GENERAL SUBJECT OF THE MIDDLE EAST, AS I THINK I
INDICATED FRIDAY, WE ARE CONTINUING OUR CONSULTATIONS WITH
THE GOVERNMENTS IN THE AREA. AND, AS I INDICATED ON
FRIDAY, OUR AMBASSADORS TO CERTAIN OF THE ARAB COUNTRIES
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ARE COMING BACK.

INCIDENTALLY, BECAUSE OF THE MEETING OF THE JOINT U.S.-
EGYPTIAN ECONOMIC COMMISSION, AMBASSADOR EILTS DID NOT COME

BACK THIS WEEKEND. HE HAS DELAYED FOR ONE WEEK HIS
RETURN.

SOME OF YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY, MR. SIMON, IS IN CAIRO ATTENDING THOSE MEETINGS.

BUT I AM NOT ABLE TO ANSWER YOUR SPECIFIC QUESTION.

Q. ARE THE OTHER AMBASSADORS BACK?

A. NO. THEY WILL BE RETURNING BUT I DO NOT HAVE THE DATES.

Q. DO YOU KNOW OF ANY FORTHCOMING VISIT BY MR. ALLON? THERE IS AN ISRAELI REPORT SAYING HE WILL COME VERY SHORTLY AT THE INVITATION OF SECRETARY KISSINGER.

A. I SAW THAT. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER WILL BE MAKING A PRIVATE VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES AROUND THE MIDDLE OF THIS MONTH. THE SECRETARY HAS INFORMED MR. ALLON THAT HE WOULD BE PLEASED TO MEET WITH HIM DURING HIS VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES.

Q. IS THERE A DATE?

A. NO, I DO NOT HAVE A DATE.

Q. WE HAVE A REPORT THIS MORNING THAT THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE REDUCED THE ECONOMIC AID PACKAGE FOR ISRAEL FROM DOLS 755 MILLION TO DOLS 740 MILLION. ARE YOU AWARE OF THAT?

A. NO, I WASN'T. I WILL HAVE TO CHECK IN ON THE STATUS OF THAT AID BILL. I NOTICE BOTH THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE HAVE BEEN CONSIDERING IT.

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Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THE EFFORTS BY ALGERIA TO GET THE POLISARIO MOVEMENT RECOGNIZED AS THE GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN SAHARA?

A. NO, I DO NOT HAVE ANYTHING SPECIFIC ON THAT. OUR POLICY ON THAT WHOLE QUESTION REMAINS AS WE HAVE STATED IT BEFORE. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE AN EXERCISE OF RESTRAINT IN THAT AREA AND A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM.

Q. DO YOU INTEND TO RECOGNIZE THE REPUBLIC?

A. I JUST CANNOT ANSWER THAT. LET US SEE WHAT HAPPENS.

Q. ON THE MIDDLE EAST, HAVE YOU ANY COMMENT TO MAKE ON ARAFAT'S PLAN FOR THE CREATION OF BUFFER ZONES IN THE GAZA, THE WEST BANK -- A WASHINGTON POST STORY WHICH WAS DENIED BY Wafa?

A. THIS IS THE STORY ABOUT THE MEETING BETWEEN MR. ARAFAT AND SENATOR STEVENSON?

Q. YES.

A. I REALLY CANNOT GET INTO THE DISCUSSION OF OUR TALKS WITH THE SENATOR, BUT HE HAS INFORMED US OF HIS VISIT TO THE MIDDLE EAST, INCLUDING HIS MEETING WITH MR. ARAFAT.

Q. DID HE SAY THERE WAS ACTUALLY AN ARAFAT PLAN OR NOT? YOU DON'T KNOW THAT?

A. HE TOLD US ABOUT HIS MEETING WITH ARAFAT. I AM JUST NOT ABLE TO COMMENT ON THE SUBSTANCE OF WHAT HE SAID. I WOULD NOTE, I BELIEVE IT WAS THIS MORNING -- THAT I HAVE SEEN A REPORT THAT A SPOKESMAN FOR THE PLO HAS DENIED THE SUBSTANCE OF REPORTED ACCOUNTS OF THE MEETING WITH MR. ARAFAT.

Q. SO WHAT HAPPENED, WHAT ARE YOU DENYING NOW? DID UNCLASSIFIED

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MR. STEVENSON TELL YOU SOMETHING ELSE?

A. WE HAD A VERY INTERESTING MEETING WITH SENATOR STEVENSON ON HIS VISIT TO THE MIDDLE EAST. HE MET WITH UNDER SECRETARY SISCO AND ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY MR. SOBER, AS WELL AS DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ARTHUR DAY.

Q. IN REFERENCE TO THE AID PROGRAM, WHERE DOES THE DEPARTMENT STAND ON THE TRANSITIONAL QUARTER FINANCING? YOU RECALL THAT THE SECRETARY SPOKE WITH SENATOR HUMPHREY.

A. MY RECOLLECTION OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S POSITION ON THAT WAS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION SAID THAT THEY FELT THEIR ORIGINAL SUBMISSION FOR ALL COUNTRIES MET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS TRANSITION PERIOD THAT'S OCCURRING BECAUSE SHIFTS OF THE DATES OF THE FISCAL YEAR. MY RECOLLECTION ALSO IS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION SAID THAT IF CONGRESS WANTED TO APPLY AN ACROSS-THE-BOARD INCREASE

THAT IT WAS PROBABLY PREPARED TO GO ALONG WITH THAT. BUT

I THINK THAT WHOLE POINT HAS BEEN OVERTAKEN AS A RESULT OF THE ACTIONS BOTH IN THE SENATE AND IN THE HOUSE.

Q. I KNOW IT HAS.

A. AND I THINK THAT THAT WAS BASICALLY THE SECRETARY'S POSITION ON AN ACROSS-THE-BOARD INCREASE WITH SENATOR HUMPHREY.

Q. WELL, IT'S OVERTAKEN BY THE ACTIONS OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE -- THE SENATE HAS VOTED IN ITS AUTHORIZATION MEASURE FOR A 25 PERCENT INCREASE OF THE FISCAL YEAR 76 LEVEL, WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR --

A. BUT WHAT IS THE ACTION?

Q. THAT'S AUTHORIZATION.

A. YES.
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Q. THE HOUSE AUTHORIZATION -- THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE HAS ALSO AUTHORIZED -- THE COMMITTEE HAS RATHER THAN THE HOUSE -- AUTHORIZED A SIMILAR SUM, ALTHOUGH THE LANGUAGE IS DIFFERENT AND WILL HAVE TO GO TO CONFERENCE. THAT'S AN AUTHORIZATION. THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE HAS NOT INCLUDED ANY FUNDING FOR THE TRANSITIONAL QUARTER ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION HAS NOT SUBMITTED A BUDGET FOR IT AS SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDS. THIS IS WHAT I HEAR FROM THE COMMITTEE.

A. YES, BUT AS I RECALL, LAST WEEK MR. NESSEN STATED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION'S POSITION WAS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION FELT THAT ITS ORIGINAL SUBMISSION COVERED THE REQUIREMENTS OF EVERYBODY -- TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THIS CHANGE IN THE FISCAL YEAR -- BUT IF THE CONGRESS ITSELF WANTED TO APPROPRIATE MONEY ACROSS THE BOARD, IT WOULD NOT OBJECT.

I WOULD LIKE TO CHECK SPECIFICALLY WHAT MR. NESSEN SAID ON THAT POINT, BUT THAT WAS MY LAST UNDERSTANDING OF THE POSITION ON THIS QUESTION.

Q. COULD WE GET AN UPDATE ON THAT, BECAUSE THE RULES COMMITTEE IS GOING TO CONSIDER BOTH MEASURES TOMORROW; THAT IS, ON THE HOUSE SIDE; AND THE VOTING IS TAKING PLACE WEDNESDAY ON AUTHORIZATIONS, PRESUMABLY CALENDARED

FOR THAT, THURSDAY ON APPROPRIATION. SO IT IS PRETTY
CLOSE. INGERSOLL

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